

## Developing Product's Development Plan

### Goals:

Try to integrate all the required components in a product's development plan.

### Theory Overview:

See lecture notes (Chapters 2-10).

The key for a project's success consists in building an adequate plan. The planning activity can represent 30% from the project manager's activity.

The plan should be configured before implying important resources in project's development, but, sure, it cannot be developed in its smaller details from the incipient phases of the project. That is why the plan's details will be pictured incrementally.

The project's plan is developed so that it assists the following main purposes:

- Expresses the project's manager vision on the manner of realizing a project and is the core, based on which all the activities are developed (project's execution base).
- Distributes the resources to the activities and explains in the same time to the team members which role are they playing in that particular project (based for the internal communication);
- Is the base for explaining how a project will be accomplished to superior managers and to other co-interested people – for example the base for following the project's financing but also for explaining project's progress and it's issues (the base for monitoring/control and external communication).

The plan should be clear, phrased without ambiguities (specifically terms must be explained in the terms dictionary).

The plan should be organized in a way that offers fast and clear the information required on different levels of detail and interest specific domains. This traduces through the use of a hierarchical structure, with separation of information on sub-domains (goals, schedule, costs, quality, risks, human resources, acquisitions, etc.). For each section it is recommended to organize the plan as a summary, followed by specific details with references to detailed documents. For example, a person from the superior administration of the organization that contracted the project desires usually to see the project's main milestones (critical data). These persons are less interested in who is responsible with each activity in detail or when that activity is accomplished. On the other part, the project's team is interested on the plan's immediate details. That's why every one must see his responsibilities, the time required and the following activity.

The project's manager must be able to select information in the plan, according to the interests of the people involved in the project.

In conclusion, each time a project plan is presented, the project's manager must consider the following points:

- The degree of detail needed in the referred situation;
- Presentation's format;
- The degree of specificity (for example if is required to present generically about the resources or must present the employees nominated specifically for certain activities).

We resume the main stages that must be passed through for achieving the plan:

- Determine the desired results: establish the major deliverables and project's goals;
- Separate the deliverables in work packages(WBS);
- Determine the activities required for accomplishing each work package; will be included the activities related to: assuring and controlling project's quality, communication, team's abilities development;
- List the sequence of activities (grouping these activities in phases);
- Determine the type and the quantity of resources required for accomplishing the identified activities;
- Estimate the effort/duration for each activity/phase;
- Introduce semi-flexible/inflexible restrictions. Preliminary schedule configuration – considering holydays, legal non-working days, trainings for the human resources; verify if the schedule is well framed in comparison to the critical dates; synchronization with other projects, etc.
- Plan's analysis – critical path + PERT;
- Estimate the costs and the budget;
- Identify the risks, analyze risks (quality analysis), plan the risks responses;
- Modify the plan according to the risks response plans;
- Analyze the plan from the quality management's perspective, communications, acquisitions, human resources. Reconfiguration plan.

Regardless of the used method for developing the plan, the project manager must be aware that the plan **will suffer changes, and sometimes, very large ones**. *A project's success doesn't consist in how well the plan was followed (unless this is also an indicator) but in honoring project's goals in time, and within the allocated budget.* During development, the project's plan suffers changes caused by unscheduled situations internal or external to the project. A project's manager must be prepared to operate these changes as a reaction to various environment changes.

One recommended plan structure is listed below. This structure must be interpreted in a flexible manner, depending on the project development's context and its type.

Project Charter;

Vision (strategy - summary);

Scope statement (goals, deliverables list);

WBS – a leaf's level corresponds to the desired for project's control;

For each deliverable (at the desired level of granularity for controlling the project): cost estimations, start date/end date, responsible;

Graphics for following the performances (goals, time, cost): schedule, graphics, budget, etc. – baseline version.

Critical data/ major milestones

Employees: categories, costs, effort (durations);

Risks management plan – identified risks, response plans;

Other documents obtained during planning processes:

- Scope Management Plan;
- Schedule Management Plan;
- Costs Management Plan;
- Human Resources Management Plan;
- Quality Management Plan;
- Acquisitions Management Plan;

Open problems.

### Working Plan:

For one of the previously presented applications, we have to pass through the following steps:

- Complete the extended project's plan, adding the following:
- Project Charter Document;
- Vision;
- Communication's Management Plan;
- Human Resources Management Plan;
- Verify plan's integrity and actualize the plan if necessary.